

**I CLAIM:**

1. A plate stand, comprising:
  - a) a support having an elevated holder;
  - b) a plate held by the holder; and
  - c) means for detachably mounting the plate on the holder.
2. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a platform above a base, and an upright column extending between the base and the platform.
3. The plate stand of claim 2, and a handle connected to, and extending away from, the column.
4. The plate stand of claim 2, wherein the base has a plurality of legs.
5. The plate stand of claim 2, wherein the base has a planar bottom surface.
6. The plate stand of claim 2, wherein the base has a pointed end.
7. The plate stand of claim 2, wherein the plate has a central aperture, and wherein the column has an end region which extends through the aperture.
8. The plate stand of claim 7, wherein the mounting means is an element in engagement with the end region.
9. The plate stand of claim 8, wherein the element has a bowl-like shape.
10. The plate stand of claim 7, wherein the end region has an open end into which a beverage container is inserted.
11. The plate stand of claim 10, wherein the beverage container is thermally insulated.

12. The plate stand of claim 7, wherein the end region has an open end at which a light source is mounted.
13. The plate stand of claim 12, wherein the light source is a candle.
14. The plate stand of claim 2, and item holders on the column, for supporting items.
15. The plate stand of claim 2, and an accessory holder detachably mounted on the column for movement relative to the column, the accessory holder including means for holding accessories.
16. The plate stand of claim 14, wherein the accessory holder is configured as an ashtray.
17. The plate stand of claim 14, wherein the accessory holder is configured as a robotic hand.
18. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the plate has a food compartment.
19. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a column of adjustable length.
20. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a lower end region extending into an apertured support surface, and an abutment for engaging the support surface.
21. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a stack of containers.
22. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a wheeled dolly on which a plurality of plates is mounted.

23. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a hollow column in which items are stored, and an end cap for closing the column.

24. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a hollow column of light-transmissive material, and a light source within the column for emitting light through the column.

25. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes multiple support elements for engaging peripheral edges of the plate.

26. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes multiple support elements for engaging a bottom of the plate.

27. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes means for controlling temperature at the plate.

28. The plate stand of claim 1, and a curtained enclosure above the plate.

29. The plate stand of claim 1, wherein the support includes a column having a lower end, and an adapter ring into which the lower end is received.

30. The plate stand of claim 29, wherein the adapter ring is connected to an electrical power source.

31. A support arrangement comprising:

a) a support surface having a plurality of mounting holes spaced apart from one another; and

b) a plurality of plate stands, each including a support having an elevated holder, a plate held by the holder, and means for detachably mounting the plate on the

holder, each support having a projection for insertion into a respective mounting hole and an abutment for engaging the support surface.

32. An adapter arrangement, comprising: ✓

- a) a support surface having a cavity;
- b) an adapter mounted in the cavity and having a mounting hole; and
- c) a plate stand including a support having an elevated holder, a plate

held by the holder, and means for detachably mounting the plate on the holder, the support having a projection for insertion into the mounting hole.